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ABSTRACT

An investigation was conducted to determine the feasibility of providing laboratory and internship experience for students enrolled in the Georgia Model program for the preparation of elementary teachers as specified in the final report of the Georgia Educational Model program (ED 025 491). Specifications require each student to complete five 5-week practical laboratory experiences (including two paraprofessional labs in the preprofessional phase) and a 10-week preservice internship. Since 1,380 students are expected to be enrolled when the program reaches sustained operational level in 1975-76, a minimum of 362 classrooms would be needed during the year. Findings resulting from a survey of 20 school systems in Georgia that cooperated with the University of Georgia in the 1968-69 school year indicate that such a laboratory program is feasible. There are a sufficient number of schools within reasonable distance willing and able to provide such activities. The majority conduct kindergarten and Headstart programs and many plan summer school programs. They include both urban and rural areas with potential for providing experiences with children from diverse socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds. (JS)

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University of Georgia
Athens, Georgia

FEASIBILITY OF PRACTICAL LABORATORY EXPERIENCES: REPORT I

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GEORGIA EDUCATIONAL MODELS
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FEASIBILITY OF PRACTICAL LABORATORY EXPERIENCES: REPORT I

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The Problem

The purpose of this investigation is to determine the feasibility of providing laboratory and internship experience for students enrolled in the Georgia Model program for the preparation of elementary teachers as specified in the final report of Georgia Educational Models project (Johnson, Shearron & Stauffer, pp. 222-25, 1968).

Background

The specifications of the model program (Johnson, Shearron & Stauffer, pp. 222-25, 1968) require each student to complete a minimum of five practical laboratory experiences and one internship during the preservice phase of the program. These experiences require close cooperation between the staff of the Model program and local school systems in the state.

Two practical laboratory experiences of approximately five weeks each are required during the preprofessional phase of the program. These occur during PM Blocks 2 and 5, and focus on paraprofessional classroom activities. One is carried out with children in early childhood and the other with children in later childhood.

A total of three practical laboratory experiences of approximately five weeks each are required during the professional phase of the program. These occur during PM Blocks 2, 4 and 7. The practical laboratory experience which occurs in PM Block 2 will focus on professional activities and will be carried out with children within the student's target age group with special concern for allowing the student to work within the teaching area of comptency which he has selected. The laboratory experiences which occur in PM Blocks 4 and 7 of the professional program focus on professional activities and are carried out with children older and younger than those of the student's age group.

Placement in the practical laboratories is such that the students have the opportunity to work with children of various socioeconomic and ethnic characteristics.

A preservice internship of approximately 10 weeks occur in PM Block 10 of the professional phase. This internship is carried out with children within the intern's target age group range and provides the intern with the opportunity to give special emphasis to instruction in his teaching area of competency.

It is anticipated that when the Georgia Educational Model reaches the sustained operational level in 1975-76, that there will be a total of 1,380 students enrolled in the program (Ayers, 1969). If one student at a time is placed in a classroom for laboratory experiences and internship, a minimum of 362 classrooms will be needed during the year. The assumption is made that a total of seven, five week periods can be used for laboratory experiences in each classroom and four ten week periods for internships. Assuming equal division between head-start, kindergarten and each of the six elementary grades, approximately 46 classrooms will be needed at each level. Additional classrooms will be needed for observation purposes.

Procedure

In order to ascertain the feasibility of the specifications for the model program with regard to laboratory experiences a survey was made of 20 school systems in Georgia that cooperated closely with the College of Education of the University of Georgia during the 1968-69 school year. These school systems cooperated by providing facilities for observation and student teaching at the kindergarten and elementary levels.

During the 1968-69 school year, about 95% of all elementary education students completed their professional laboratory experiences (Elementary Education 345, 346, 347, and 348) in these 20 school systems which are located primarily in North Georgia. For purposes of this report they have been sub-grouped in four geographical areas:

Area 1- Five school systems located within a 25 mile radius of Athens, Georgia: Clarke County, Madison County, Oconee County, Oglethorpe County and Winder City.

Area 2- Seven school systems located in the Metropolitan Atlanta area: Atlanta Public, Clayton County, Cobb County, Dekalb County, Fulton County, Gwinnett County and Marietta City.

Area 3- Seven school systems located in northeast Georgia within thirty miles of Gainesville, Georgia: Gainesville City, Banks County, Franklin County, Habersham County, Hall County, Hart County and Stephens County.

Area 4- One school system, Richmond County, located approximately 105 miles southeast of Athens, Georgia.

In July, 1969 a questionnaire (Figure 1) was sent by the Coordinator of Professional Laboratory Experiences to the superintendents of the school systems mentioned above. All were returned.

Findings

A summary of some of the findings of the questionnaire are presented in Table 1. During the 1968-69 academic year there were a total of 9,687 classrooms available during the academic year and 1,175 during the summer in the 20 cooperating school systems. No school system is presently operating a 12 month program for the elementary grades. However, three systems anticipate implementing a twelve month program, one each in 1970, 1971 and 1973. Two systems indicated that they are studying the feasibility of a 12 month school year for the elementary grades.

Seventeen of the school systems operated a summer school program with a total of 790 elementary classrooms; 35 kindergarten classrooms, primarily supported by funds from Title I and Title III of ESEA; 65 classrooms in reading; and 35 special classes in such areas as music, art, and physical education. Two school systems

Questionnarie for the Georgia Educational Model

Feasibility Study School System _____

Approximate number of elementary classrooms in use in

1968-69 _____

1. Do you contemplate your school system adopting a 12 months program and operating on a quarter system in the elementary schools? _____ If yes, give approximate year you anticipate initiating this type program _____

2. Do you now operate any type of summer school? _____ If yes, please tell briefly what type program is being conducted and what age and how many children are involved.

3. If you do not now have a summer program, do you anticipate such a program within the next five years? _____

4. Do you now operate a kindergarten program? _____ If yes, what is the approximate enrollment? _____

5. If you do not now operate a kindergarten program, do you anticipate initiating such a program within the next five years (assuming the state does not provide support for such a program)? _____

6. Do you now operate a headstart program? _____ Summer only _____, Year round _____. If yes, about how many children are involved in the program? _____

7. If you now operate or anticipate operating a summer program, would you be willing to have student interns (student teachers) work in these programs? _____.

Figure 1

TABLE 1

SUMMARY OF SCHOOL SYSTEM SURVEY

	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4	Total
No. of Elementary Classrooms in use during 1968-69	458	7,331	744	744	9,277
No. of Elementary Classrooms available during summer 1969	19	806	75	25	925
No. of Kindergarten Classrooms available during 1968-69*	11	389	10	0	410
No. of Headstart Classrooms available in summer 1969	15	181	34	20	250

*Includes a limited number of children in other types of programs for children under six years of age.

indicated that they would probably initiate a summer program in the next five years.

Nine school systems operated a total of 410 kindergarten classrooms during the 1968-69 academic year. Four school systems plan to initiate some type of kindergarten program within the next five years. Headstart programs were conducted in 16 systems during the summer of 1969. It is anticipated that these programs will continue. No year 'round headstart program is presently operated in any of the school systems in this survey.

All school systems survey indicated a willingness to expand their program of cooperation with the University of Georgia College of Education by making their facilities available on year 'round bases for observation and practical laboratory experiences. One additional school system, Walker County, Georgia, located in the northwest part of the state has indicated a strong desire to work with the Georgia model program in providing laboratory experiences.

Conclusions

It may be concluded from this study that the specifications for the Georgia model program which require each student to devote approximately 35 weeks of his

undergraduate work to practical laboratory experiences and/or an internship in elementary schools are feasible at the University of Georgia. It appears that there are a sufficient number of elementary schools within reasonable distances from the campus which are willing and able to enter into cooperative arrangements to provide for such activities.

These school systems have the potential to provide a variety of experiences. The majority of the systems presently conduct kindergarten and headstart programs as well as other special programs that can provide laboratory experiences for students in the Georgia Educational Model. The school systems represented are found in both large urban areas and rural areas. These systems also have the potential for providing experiences in which students will be able to work with children from diverse socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds.

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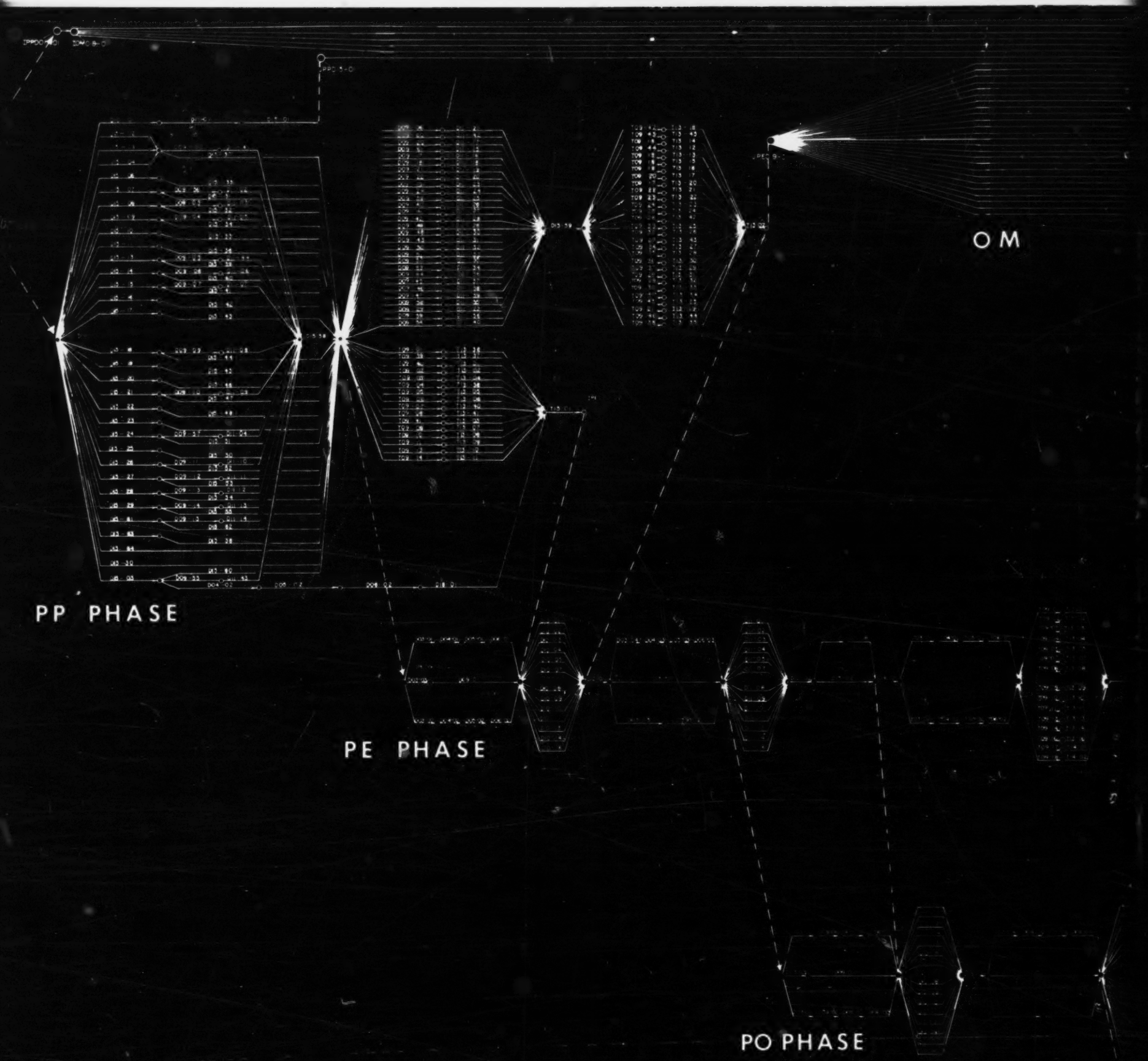
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